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YOUR PERSONAL GUIDE TO PARKING TICKETS

AVOIDING AND DEALING WITH PARKING TICKETS

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PARKING TICKET GUIDE

Your Personal Guide to Parking Tickets
Avoiding and Dealing with Parking Tickets

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Introduction

It was revealed, (16th May 2005), a parking ticket is issued in Britain every five seconds. Motorists are paying more than £1 billion a year in fines.

As the number of vehicles on the UK's roads has increased, the need for places to park them has become the subject of intense and often acrimonious debate. Should drivers be able to park wherever they desire? Or should restrictions and charges be imposed on every driver wishing to park her car in the UK? Of course, the answer is somewhere in between. People parking dangerously or in a position that interrupts the flow of traffic are menaces and nuisances, but there is a growing feeling that risk and inconvenience are exaggerated in an effort to raise revenue via squads of moped-straddling parking attendants aggressively issuing tickets. If such suspicions are true, it is quite likely that certain traffic wardens are overstepping the line and issuing tickets in cases that are at best borderline, at worst highly dubious. The purpose of this guide is to clarify the legal standing of motorists accused of parking infringements, particularly when they feel that they have committed no crime.

Motorists blocking fire stations or residential driveways, parking on zebra crossings or blatantly dodging parking fees might gain little from the guide. It is aimed at the falsely accused, the unreasonably ticketed and the victims of intimidating tactics from ticket issuers. Parking the growing number of vehicles on the UK's streets is a problem that requires debate, common sense and mutual understanding, and many of the measures and laws in place to restrict parking are welcome means of preventing what could otherwise become gridlock in any built-up area. But it must be a two-way street. By arming motorists with an understanding of the law surrounding parking, it is hoped that unscrupulous and indiscriminate ticketing, clamping and towing away will become things of the past.

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1. Tickets and Issuers

There are two kinds of ticket issued in the UK: Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) and Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). FPNs are issued by police officers or traffic wardens (employed by the police force); PCNs are issued by local authority parking attendants (employed by the local authority). In the early 1990s the law was changed to allow local authorities to enforce their own parking restrictions and, controversially, to set and collect the fines themselves. In 1994 London became the first authority to use its own parking attendants, and throughout the country the system is gradually replacing traffic wardens, some say with a greater emphasis on revenue raising rather than to assist drivers. All issuers patrol areas with parking meters, pay & display booths, yellow lines, residents' bays, etc., and put their Notices on vehicles illegally positioned or exceeding time limits. Many local authority parking attendants are under subcontracted, rather than direct, employment of the local authority, and will have won their contracts through competitive tendering in return for promises of favourable returns or minimum costs – and, of course, an improved flow of traffic. Commission payments and good performance rewards sometimes provide incentives for the attendants.

(For the remainder of this guide, the term "issuer" will occasionally be used generically to describe traffic wardens, police officers or local authority parking attendants. Similarly, the term "parking ticket" can refer to FPNs or PCNs where the difference is immaterial.)

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2. Finding that your vehicle has received a ticket

If you find a ticket under your windscreen wiper, there is no point throwing it away, as the person who issued it will have his own record of the action. Stories abound that only a small percentage of parking fines are ever chased up, but only the inveterate gambler would decide to take no action in the hope of being ignored. Straight away it is up to you to do one of two things: accept the fine and pay it or start building up a defence with a view to challenging the ticket.

Paying the fine

If you admit you are in the wrong and do not think you have an argument, it is worthwhile paying the fine as soon as possible. This is because there is usually a smaller charge for prompt payment. Typically, a payment made within 14 days of the offence will cost £30, but waiting until after 14 days will result in a fine of £60. These amounts vary from place to place, and serious infringements might not be subject to the prompt payment rule.

If you fail to pay the fine for 28 days, the owner of the car will be sent a "Notice to Owner" (NtO). You will be located using your vehicle's registration number as logged at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). It is theoretically possible that the ticket had been stolen, blown or washed from the windscreen before the driver returned, or that the driver was not the owner. Therefore no additional charges will be payable, although there will be no prompt-payment "bonus" available. If you feel aggrieved at having to pay the full amount when you received no ticket, withhold the payment and write a letter explaining the situation. You might be allowed to pay the lesser amount.

Of course, receiving an NtO does not necessarily mean that you have committed a parking offence – it merely means that your car was allegedly parked illegally. Your car might have been borrowed, stolen, hired out or sold before the offence took place, in which case you will need to provide evidence such as diaries, crime reference numbers, hire details or DVLA registration documents, respectively. You are entitled to pass on the NtO to the person responsible for the parking offence. They of course might dispute the allegation, in which case they should challenge the fine themselves.

Like ticket issuers, NtO issuers sometimes make mistakes, so if the cost of the fine or any details in the description are incorrect, you should challenge them. It is worth having a good look at the ticket and making sure you agree with everything before paying it.

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If the fine has not been paid 28 days after the NtO has been issued, and no appeal has been entered into, you will be sent a charge certificate instructing you to pay the full fine plus 50%, and you will have lost the right to appeal.

Querying or challenging the fine

If you are not convinced that you have parked illegally, or indeed if you are absolutely certain you have not, do not move the vehicle, and start to gather your own evidence. Some motorists, particularly ones who believe they have been falsely accused in the past, have taken to carrying a disposable camera with them in their car. A photograph might not be admissible in court (the driver could of course move the car into a legal position before taking the shot), but as a general record of the alleged infringement, it could prove useful. Don't forget that you might have a camera on your mobile phone, as might a sympathetic passer-by, although such digital photos are easier to manipulate and might raise suspicion of tampering in borderline cases. Photographs may also be taken of the surrounding area, of the state of double-yellow lines, of the legibility of signs, of the lighting conditions, etc., if this would help your case. Passers-by might also be willing to provide witness statements; if they are, make sure you get their contact details. Take note of the date and the exact time, and write everything down if you can.

Next, write a letter to the issuing body explaining your case. The address will be on the ticket itself. If guilt is in doubt, for example if notices or road markings of parking restrictions are unclear, or if you believe that you were outside the time limits or the restricted area, it is worth raising your objections at this stage. Enclosing copies of photographs and other evidence (but not the originals) will give weight to your argument and show that you are serious about your challenge. Ticket issuers do make mistakes, and their superiors will have the power to cancel the fine if you are found to be innocent. It is even possible that if you made an innocent error and transgressed only slightly, the issuing body might show leniency and cancel your ticket, but they are under no obligation to do so.

You will help yourself by making sure that the tone of the letter is not aggressive or patronising, but keeping it firm and positive. For minor infringements, an admission of guilt with a reason could win you sympathy, but this approach should only be used where an innocent mistake has been made and the alternative is a definite fine. Some adjudicators might show a human side and let you off. This is the last point in your challenge at which compassion can be used in your defence. If you take the case to court or tribunal (see below) you are either innocent or guilty based on the evidence and the law.

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If the ticket was issued by the police or a traffic warden (i.e., if it is an FPN), any appeals advancing beyond this stage will be dealt with at the local magistrates court. If it was issued by a local authority parking attendant (i.e., if it is a PCN), appeals will go to independent tribunal.

If you lose the tribunal, you can take the case to the National Parking Adjudication Service (NPAS), an independent organisation, where a lawyer will deal with your case and come up with a final decision, which cannot be appealed.

If you do not know why you were issued the ticket and are neither admitting nor denying the charges, you can still query the fine by writing to or calling the issuing authority and asking for an explanation. Their response will determine whether you decide to follow up by paying the fine or challenging it.

It is worth mentioning that querying a ticket can have the added benefit of "restarting the clock" as regards the 14 days passage before the fine is raised. Whatever the nature of your query or challenge, it is not advisable to send the fine payment with the letter, partly because it could be seen as an admission of guilt and partly because it could prove difficult and time-consuming to get the money back as it will almost certainly be banked (even if you're found innocent).

If you do not receive a reply 56 days after sending the query or appeal, the Notice must be cancelled.

Taking it further

If your plea to the issuing authority is rejected and you still refuse to accept their decision, you can take the case to court. Failure to pay the fine or enter into any correspondence with the issuers will probably end up with a court summons. Think very carefully before you decide to take things this far, as losing could become much more expensive than the original ticket. In short, you need to be certain that you are in the right and that you can prove it. It is worth noting that you are unlikely to have your costs paid even if you win such a case. Court is not the place to take a minor grievance or to appeal for compassion. It is the court's job to decide if you are innocent or guilty of the infringement, not to judge your personality or hear about your otherwise flawless parking record. In other words, you either did it or you didn't, and your punishment or victory depends on what the court finds.

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3. Discovering your vehicle being ticketed

If you arrive back at your vehicle to discover a ticket being issued for it, your actions should be determined by the type of issuer. If it is a police officer or traffic warden, the ticket cannot be cancelled once it has started being written out. They will be able to use your registration number to contact you through the licensing authorities. If it is a local authority parking attendant, however, the ticket is deemed issued only when it has been placed on the vehicle or handed to you, the driver, personally. In other words, it is advisable to resist the temptation to argue, get in your car and drive off. Of course, this does not mean you can run into or attempt to injure him in your bid for escape, and you will no doubt find yourself facing criminal charges if you decide to take this course.

Parking attendants must be in uniform when issuing a ticket. If they are not, the ticket is invalid. Although the uniform is supposed to include the cap, it is not considered as important if the issuer is otherwise uniformed, although it is worth noting if part of a collection of items of evidence in an appeal.

No matter how much you resent the fact that you have been ticketed, it is worth taking a moment to consider that the traffic warden is only doing her job, and you do have channels of appeal if you feel aggrieved. Violence, threats, bribes or aggressive behaviour are not acceptable, and are guaranteed to hinder your cause.

If you are a few moments late and the issuer is still around, there is no harm in approaching her in an non-aggressive, businesslike manner and asking why the ticket was issued. You may want to use what they say as evidence if you disagree. As covered in section 2, go about the evidence gathering steps if you feel hard done by. You should also ask them to add your own comments to their own notes.

Otherwise, the steps you should follow up with are the same as those should you discover the ticket (see section 2: Finding that your vehicle has received a ticket) on your vehicle but without an attendant present.

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4. Clamping and Removal

Clamping and removal of vehicles have since their inception been contentious issues. A parking ticket is a minor inconvenience but with a financial sting; having your vehicle clamped or taken away is both a financial burden and a potentially devastating matter, particularly if you rely on your vehicle for work or need to pick the kids up from school in half an hour.

What really annoys motorists is that much of the time the parking infringement is relatively minor compared to the punishment, and a car can be impounded or immobilised simply for being on private land, with little option for reasonable argument. Many of the clampers patrolling today's roads are private firms employed by local authorities, neighbourhoods, individuals and businesses who see illegal parking as a problem. There are doubtless cases where illegal parking has been such a blight on an area that extreme measures became necessary, but the majority of vehicles being clamped or removed are victims of overstaying at parking meters and such like. It is often seen as another form of revenue gathering. Motorists do have some rights, however, when it comes to clamping, and they are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Once a vehicle has been clamped or removed, a release fee must be paid before it is unlocked or returned. In the case of removal, you may even be landed with a cumulative storage charge which will only stop growing once the payment has been made and the vehicle claimed. If you wait more than an hour after release before you collect your vehicle, it may be re-clamped or the storage charge might start to be applied again.

If you arrive back at your vehicle before the clamp has been locked, or before the car has been lifted off the ground, you are legally entitled to have the relevant operation stopped. You might end up with a parking ticket, but this is far preferable. Locking and lifting are considered the moment of no return, and there is little point arguing if you are a few seconds late – it will probably already have been booked.

Blue Badge Scheme members (disabled drivers) cannot have their vehicle clamped, and it can only be removed if it is causing a danger or a major inconvenience to other motorists.

Legally, a vehicle cannot be clamped or removed until 15 minutes after the expiry of a parking meter or pay & display period. You might still receive a ticket, however.

But take note: you can be found guilty of criminal damage if you attempt to remove the clamps yourself. Clamps are strong and designed not to be taken off by force, so if you do manage to prise one off, you will probably have damaged it beyond repair (not to mention what you could do to your

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own wheel). Technically, this applies even if the clamps were placed in error, although a judge might see it differently.

It seems that the government has recognised a problem in private clamping firms, and on 28 February, 2005 it became compulsory for clampers in England and Wales to be licensed by the Security Industry Authority (the SIA) and for them to follow its Code of Conduct. According to the SIA's website:

Poor service delivery and the criminal element will be removed from the industry with the introduction of a new national licence for wheel clampers (operating on private land), their supervisors, managers and directors. Under new SIA regulations vehicle immobilisers will be required to undergo an identity check, a criminal records check and pass a five-day training course to show they have reached set levels of training and professional standards.

It is a welcome measure and should hopefully stamp out the "rogue" clampers. If you are clamped by a non-licensed clamper, you do not have to pay anything and you can even take them to court.

Wrongful clamping or removal

If you believe you were not in the wrong when you had your vehicle clamped or removed, you can make a claim. The grounds for being let off or being found to have done no wrong are the same as those for receiving a ticket as covered in Querying or challenging the fine above and section 5, Exemptions below. The difference, though, is that withholding payment might not be an option as you will probably need your vehicle to get around, and the only way you can get it back is to pay the release fee. Legal and compassionate arguments should be used to avoid paying all or some of the fine, and both can be effective. Remember to start gathering evidence such as inspecting the state and visibility of signs and road markings, and take pictures if possible. If you keep your disposable camera in your glove box and your car is removed, you can consider yourself unlucky!

If you decide to follow the legal route, you should be sure that you have a good case, as the financial implications could become significant if your claim is rejected.

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5. Exemptions and get-outs

There are several situations where you will be exempt from paying a parking fine, and they are covered in this section. Some are where signs of restriction are not clear or missing, others involve what the driver was doing at the time or who the driver was. The principles are the same in that they both give grounds for appeal. These are classic situations where the camera in your glove box or phone can pay dividends.

Obscured or damaged lines

If yellow lines are hidden, damaged or erased, whether it is completely or partially, you cannot be fined for parking on them. It does not matter if they are temporarily or permanently obscured – fallen leaves, snow, litter, roadworks debris, soil or sand can all cover yellow lines enough to hide them and make your fine invalid. Even if the lines are only partly obscured, you have a chance of appeal, as the law states that yellow lines must be continuous. However, if the concealment starts some distance from your vehicle, you will be deemed to be parked on continuous yellow lines and the fine will stand.

Unclear signage

Single yellow and broken yellow lines need to be accompanied by signs indicating the times of day, week or year in which parking restrictions apply. These signs must be placed at every point of entry into a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and must be clearly written, visible and understandable to be within the law. If they do not meet these standards, you have grounds for appeal. Look out for trees and bushes hanging over the signs and make sure that the sign is not covered in grime, graffiti, fly posters or other such materials. Double yellow lines indicate no parking at any time, so need no accompanying signs.

Blue Badge Scheme

If you are a Blue Badge Scheme Badgeholder and your car is displaying its badge, you are allowed to park in certain restricted areas, as long as you are not causing an obstruction, for up to three hours. You can also park for free at parking meters and certain pay & display zones. However, the scheme does not apply to:

- off-street car parks
- private roads

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- bus lanes
- cycle lanes
- where temporary restrictions are in place, for example where there are traffic cones,
- at or on the approach to schools or pedestrian crossings,
- in private parking bays (unless otherwise instructed), where there is a specific loading/unloading restriction indicated

Section 10 of the Blue Badge Scheme Explanatory Booklet describes in more detail the restrictions, but this list gives the general idea. Common sense is advised.

When parking as a Blue Badgeholder, the Blue Badge need not be held by the driver, as long as he has a badgeholder as a passenger and that passenger's trip was the reason for parking.

(The Blue Badge Scheme has replaced the Orange Badge Scheme as part of a move to unify disabled parking over the whole of Europe. Difficulty walking is not necessarily a condition of qualifying. To qualify as a Blue Badge Scheme badgeholder, you need to have notice from a general practitioner, doctor or occupational therapist that you require one. For more information, visit http://www.direct.gov.uk)

Loading and unloading

Unless you are causing a serious obstruction, it is generally acceptable to load or unload your vehicle by parking it in restricted areas (for more details on signs of restriction, see Restriction signs below). Loading several items should be carried out in a continuous manner (but see the next paragraph for exemptions) and you should be on your way as soon as the delivery or collection is complete. Loading is not permitted from other people's private parking bays, disabled parking spaces or where specific, clearly indicated restrictions apply (see below).

When does loading become parking? This is a grey area, and discretion needs to be applied by issuers. Generally, they will observe vehicles for a period of time between two and five minutes before issuing a ticket, and if they see someone loading or unloading they should not issue one unless an obstruction is being caused. The size, weight and nature of the object(s) being loaded or unloaded makes a difference too. If the objects are small, few and easily carried, you will not be expected to be stopped for long. If it is a piano or heavy machinery, you might well need to spend some time inside the building. Should an issuer ticket you when you have been delivering such an object, you may have grounds for appeal if you can prove what you were loading or unloading was awkward, large or heavy. If you were delivering something professionally, you can use your delivery notes as evidence.

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Some areas have "No Loading" signs (which also applies to unloading) accompanied by yellow dashes on the kerb. If the dashes are double, no loading is permitted at any time. If they are single, loading is restricted to certain hours, days or months, the scope of such restrictions being indicated on the sign. 8 am - 6 pm means that is when you cannot load, not when you can.

Is shopping, or popping into a takeaway, considered loading? Generally, no. You might be shown lenience if you were going into a shop to pick up a pre-ordered item, but if you are planning on browsing or waiting for food to be prepared, it would be best to park where there is no doubt as to your right to.

Where there are single or double red lines, there will usually be bays where loading is allowed, but outside these bays the normal restrictions apply.

The meanings of signs and markings are given in section 6, Restriction signs and markings, but they can also be found in the Highway Code.

Parking meters

There is a common belief that parking at a meter which is out of order or which has a hood over it is allowable and that no charge needs to be paid. This is not true. If a meter is out of order, you cannot park in its bay. If you put money in the meter and it is not accepted but you do not get the money back, you should be able to park there for the time paid for, but it is a good idea to leave a note in the car saying what happened. Saying when you will be back might be seen as an invitation to car thieves, so it might not be a good idea to put this detail in the note and nor should you be expected to.

There is also a common misconception that you can park before going to get some change for the meter, then returning to the car to pay. This is not true either. You need to pay as soon as you arrive, so make sure you keep some change in your car. Modern meters accept a variety of coins so motorists can have little excuse for not paying promptly.

Being ticketed improperly

There are specific rules regarding the actual act of ticketing a vehicle by the issuer. One is that the issuer should be in uniform at the time of issuing the ticket. This rule is more relevant if you find the issuer in the act of writing out the ticket, but even if you find the ticket and see no issuer, witnesses or CCTV cameras could have seen the issuer out of uniform and writing the ticket. Issuers themselves are not allowed to act in an intimidating manner, and they cannot act in a way that

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creates an offence where one was not previously present, for example pushing a car into a no-parking zone or blocking in a vehicle thus preventing it from moving.

Details on the ticket

The ticket itself must meet certain standards of clarity and accuracy. An illegible or inaccurate ticket can often successfully be challenged. Although FPNs and PCNs differ slightly, a few details are entered onto both tickets. These details include the vehicle's registration number, its colour, its make or model, a ticket registration code (listed in section 8), the issuer's identity, the location, time and date of the offence, a description of the offence and its relevant code and the cost of the fine. If any of these details are incorrect or omitted, you stand a very good chance of getting off, as they suggest that the notice was scribbled out in a hurry or even that it was not observed in any detail, if at all (i.e., it could have been word of mouth).

On the subject of colour, however, if you own a maroon car and it says purple on the ticket, it is probably not worth challenging if this is the only point in your favour. If it is red and the ticket says yellow, you have a case. Issuers do not carry colour swatches around with them, and the colour written down need only be an approximation.

Summary

Despite the ways of avoiding fines, there are at least 64 ways of infringing the laws on parking, and issuing authorities, the police and local authorities are getting very good at rebutting claims. The chances are, the great excuse you've come up with will have been heard a thousand times before. You might find yourself wasting time and money hopelessly chasing up a no-win case; it is hoped that this guide will help you to decide whether you have a good chance of success. For every disgruntled parker there are several equally disgruntled motorists who have been blocked in or cannot find a space to park because of unrestricted parking. Many of the parking laws make perfectly good sense and contain suitable punishments for certain drivers who choose to flout them. This guide is aimed at people who have fallen victim to overzealous and unreasonable application of punishments for minor or borderline cases. In the end, if you have broken the law and you know it, it might be worth paying the fine and learning from it.

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6. Restriction signs and markings

Signs and markings indicating restricted parking are covered in the Highway Code, but it is worth mentioning them here. If there are no markings, there is no restriction, unless there are general rules about parking, for example on motorways or where it would be dangerous or cause traffic flow problems – humped-back bridges, narrow roads and on corners are typical examples.

Road Markings

Yellow lines

Double yellow lines mean no parking at any time, unless specific permission is given. Single yellow lines mean no waiting during the times shown on the accompanying sign. Both should have a short line at each end at 90° to the main line, which shows the point at which the restriction starts and ends. It is not uncommon for roadworks near the kerb to leave section of unlined tarmac. Although you might have a case for parking there, if there are no short yellow dashes at either side of the tarmac, the yellow lines are deemed continuous. However, this would be a borderline case, particularly if the rest of the yellow lines were completely obscured by illegally parked cars when you arrived.

Red lines

Double and single red lines have the same meanings as their yellow counterparts, but are normally found in metropolitan areas and are more focused on loading than parking. They should always be accompanied by a sign detailing the restrictions. A white dashed area of a red-line zone means that parking can take place outside of restricted times or days, and/or for a limited stay. A red dashed line in a red-line zone means that loading can only take place outside of restricted periods.

Double white lines

You should not stop where there are double white lines down the centre of the road, except to pick up or drop off a passenger and only then when that action causes no danger.

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Markings on the kerb

Single yellow dashes on the kerb mean that loading or unloading is allowed within the times permitted as detailed on the accompanying sign. Double yellow dashes mean no loading or unloading at any time.

Designated loading areas

These are indicated by white dashed lines with the words "LOADING ONLY" and an accompanying sign. This means no parking.

Schools

Most schools have zigzag lines in yellow or white and the words "SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR" on them. There is to be no stopping whatsoever on these lines, even if it is picking up a child, and even if you are a Blue Badge Scheme badgeholder.

Designated spaces

Certain people, for example doctors, paramedics and fire chiefs may have a reserved space, marked by a dashed white line and the person's profession. No parking or loading here.

Bus lanes and bus stops

No parking is allowed on bus lanes or at bus stops. Bus lanes will often be operational only during peak hours. According to the Highway Code, Rule 215, you must not stop there during the hours of operation but there does not seem to be a general restriction other than any that are indicated by other markings or signs.

Box junctions

You cannot park on a box junction, or indeed close to or on any junction.

Pedestrian crossings

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Pedestrian crossings come in several forms, some accompanied by traffic lights, others with flashing amber lights. You should not park near to them, particularly on the zigzig lines that extend both ways from the crossing.

"KEEP CLEAR"

You cannot park where it says "KEEP CLEAR" on the road. They are often placed where traffic backs up at a junction or outside emergency services access roads. You should not even queue in them, let alone load or park.

Signs

Signs giving instructions of parking restrictions may or may not accompany road markings. There are several colours and shapes of parking signs, but the message is the same: obey the parking rules. They can include time, day, month or seasonal instructions or can be more specific, such as those outside football grounds imposing parking restrictions on match days only, or on market days where streets are officially given over to market traders. Markings on the road often serve to show the limits of the restriction, but the restrictions might apply until you pass an "End of restrictions" sign. Signs can indicate that certain people (for example badgeholders or permit holders) can park there. They can also show how long the maximum stay is at a particular zone (not just that specific space). Make sure you have read and understood the sign before parking!

Miscellaneous

As far as parking restrictions are concerned, Bank Holidays are the same as Sundays, unless otherwise specified. If a sign says no parking on a Sunday, you cannot park there on a Bank Holiday either. If no days of the week are specified, the restrictions apply every day.

Even if unsigned, you should not park where the kerb drops to road level to allow residents' or professionals' vehicles, wheelchair users or pushchairs across.

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7. Interesting ways of avoiding fines

Pay & display areas

New pay & display systems are coming into use that require the payer at the machine to enter their vehicle's registration number, which will then be printed onto the ticket. Why is this? It is because drivers have found a clever way of avoiding paying for excess time. If they return to their vehicle and find that they have been ticketed for overstaying the paid-for period (which can be galling when it is no fault of their own and by only a few minutes), some drivers approach other returning drivers and ask if they could have their ticket. This ticket is then copied and used as part of a claim. The driver will say that she was parked legally but that the issuer must have not seen the ticket. Of course, the ticket needs to cover the time entered on the Notice. Without other evidence, there is little the issuing authority can do to rebut this claim, and it could result in a let-off. Now it is clear how having your registration number on the ticket can stop this method in its tracks, as the number is written on the ticket itself and it will not match the one on the pay & display ticket.

Although it is not advisable to use this method *instead of* paying (after all, how many motorists would gladly let you park for free when they have paid?), it might be met with sympathy from certain parkers.

Motorcyclists

Motorcyclists have discovered a neat loophole in the law to avoid parking tickets. Since issuers are not legally permitted to tamper with a vehicle except to lift the windscreen wiper or secure the ticket in place, they are not allowed to remove a rain cover placed over a motorcycle. This means that the vehicle is technically anonymous, as the number plates are not visible, and it is therefore not possible to issue a valid notice. Some motorcyclists have even started to remove their number plate and tax disc after parking and reaffixing them before they ride off. Although this might seem illegal, it is (for the time being at least) within the law.

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8. PCN Contravention Codes

Below is a table of PCN Contravention Codes, as found on the ticket. Nos 01–63 and 99 apply to on-street parking, and 70–94 apply to off-street parking (mainly car parks).

Code	Description
01	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours
02	Parked or loading/unloading in a restricted street where waiting and loading/unloading restrictions are in force
04	Parked in a meter bay when penalty time is indicated
05	Parked after the expiry of paid-for time at a pay & display (or voucher) bay
06	Parked without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket (or voucher)
07	Parked with payment made to extend the stay beyond initial time ('meter feeding')
08	Parked at an out-of-order meter during controlled hours
09	Parked displaying multiple pay & display tickets where prohibited
10	Parking without clearly displaying two (or other number) valid pay and display tickets when required
15	Parked in a residents' parking space without clearly displaying a valid residents' parking permit
16	Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit
20	Parked in a loading gap marked by a yellow line
21	Parked in a suspended bay/space or part of a bay/space
22	Re-parked in the same parking place within one hour (or other specified time) of leaving
23	Parked in a parking place or area not designated for that class of vehicle
24	Not parked correctly within the markings of the bay or space
25	Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading
26	(London only) Vehicle parked more than 50 cm from the kerb and not within a designated parking place
27	(London only) Parked adjacent to a dropped footway
30	Parked for longer than permitted
31	(London only) Entering and stopping in a box junction when prohibited
32	(London only) Failing to drive in the direction shown by the arrow on a blue sign
33	(London only) Using a route restricted to certain vehicles
34	(London only) Vehicle seen contravening bus lane regulations
35	Parked in a disc parking place without clearly displaying a valid disc
36	Parked in a disc parking place for longer than permitted
37	(London only) Failing to comply with a give way to oncoming vehicles sign
40	Parked in a designated disabled person's parking place without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge
41	Parked in a parking place designated for diplomatic vehicles
42	Parked in a parking place designated for police vehicles
45	Parked on a taxi rank
46	Parked on a clearway where stopping is prohibited
47	Parked on a restricted bus stop/stand

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48 Stopped in a restricted area outside a school (sometimes applies during term time only)
49 Parked wholly or partly on a cycle track
50 (London only) Failing to comply with a sign indicating a prohibited turn
51 (London only) Failing to comply with a no entry sign
52 (London only) Failing to comply with a sign indicating a prohibition on certain types of vehicle
53 (London only) Failing to comply with a sign indicating a restriction on vehicles entering a pedestrian zone
54 (London only) Failing to comply with a sign indicating a restriction on vehicles entering an waiting in a pedestrian zone
55 A commercial vehicle parked in a restricted street in contravention of the Overnight Waiting Ban
56 Parked in contravention of a commercial vehicle waiting restriction
57 Parked in contravention of a coach ban
58 (London only) Using a vehicle on a restricted street during prescribed hours without a valid permit
59 (London only) Using a vehicle on a restricted street during prescribed hours in breach of permit conditions
61 A heavy commercial vehicle wholly or partly parked on a footway, verge or land between two carriageways
62 Parked with one or more wheels on any part of an urban road other than a carriageway (footway parking)
63 Parked with engine running where prohibited
70 Parked in a loading area during restricted hours without reasonable excuse
77 RESERVED FOR DVLA USE
80 Parked for longer than the maximum period permitted
81 Parked in a restricted area in a car park
82 Parked after the expiry of time paid for in a pay & display (or voucher) car park
83 Parked in a pay & display (or voucher) car park without clearly displaying a valid pay & display ticket (or voucher)
84 Parked with additional payment made to extend the stay beyond time first purchased
85 Parked in a permit bay without clearly displaying a valid permit
86 Parked beyond the bay markings
87 Parked in a disabled person's parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge
88 DELETED
89 Vehicle parked exceeds maximum weight and/or height permitted in the area
90 Re-parked within one hour (or other specified time) of leaving a bay or space in a car park
91 Parked in an area not designated for that class of vehicle
92 Parked causing an obstruction
93 Parked in car park when closed
94 Parked in a pay and display car park without clearly displaying two (or other number) valid pay and display tickets when required
99 (London only) Stopped on a pedestrian crossing and/or crossing area marked by zig-zags

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Glossary

CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CPZ	Controlled Parking Zone
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notice
NPAS	National Parking Adjudication Service
NtO	Notice to Owner
PCN	Penalty Charge Notice
SIA	Security Industry Authority

Resources

http://www.bbc.co.uk/crime/support/parkingticket.shtml - Support for Parking tickets.

http://www.abd.org.uk/parking.htm - The Association of British Drivers - Parking Tickets

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